Again thanking you for your hearty commendations of my course in relation to this subject, and assuring you that I shall continue to do all in my power to further the work, I remain Yours respectfuly,

NORMAN J. COLMAN, *Commissioner.*

Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C., Oct. 20, 1886.

Second blooming of Salix humilis.

On the 25th of last September, while collecting the leaves of some willows, I came across a bush of S. humilis which was full of partially developed staminate catkins and three fully developed ones. I visited the place two weeks later and about one-half of the catkins had bloomed. The other half had dried up and withered.

OLIVER A. FARWELL.

Phœnix, Mich.

CURRENT LITERATURE.

Plant Analysis: qualitative and quantitative. By G. Dragendorff, Ph. D. Translated from the German by Henry G. Greenish, F. I. C. J. H. Vail & Co., New York, 1884. 8vo. pp. 280.

The study of plant constituents, a most important part of a full knowledge of plants, received a great impetus from the publication of this work. Both in its original form and its English version it at once attracted attention for its completeness, compactness and adaptability to the requirements of the student. The translation is exceptionably accurate and satisfactory, and has all the value of an original work.

The study of chemical botany is now receiving more attention than heretofore, and merits, and is likely to obtain, a larger place yet in the curriculum of botanical science, being especially appropriate as a part of the course in vegetable physiology, and even more so in medical and pharmaceutical botany. This change can be chiefly traced to the influence of Dr. Dragendorff's work, for although it has been before the public but a short time, it has nevertheless come to be looked upon as the standard and necessary guide in such study.

A certain amount of knowledge of chemistry, chemical manipulation, and of the microscope, is presupposed in the pupil, but having this, the work will be found as clear and simple as the complex nature of the subject permits. Its arrangement is such that it can not fail to stimulate the pupil to original investigation, for while the limits of the work would only permit the introduction of the more important constituents of plants, yet he is kept upon the alert for less usual or unknown compounds, which are to be worked out from information gathered elsewhere, the copious references to literature aiding him in his research.

The fact that the work is specially adapted for the investigation of chemical problems from a botanical point of view, makes the notice of it at this time peculiarly fitting, as Miss Martin's recent articles on the subject have undoubtedly turned the thoughts of our readers in this direction.

General Biology. By William T. Sedgwick, Ph. D., and Edmund B. Wilson, Ph. D. Part I. 8° pp. vii. 193. Henry Holt & Co., New York, 1886. American Science Series.

A new book on biology is always welcome, especially when it deals with methods of laboratory work. Every respectable teacher believes in laboratory methods, but every good teacher follows no guide blindly, and has notions of his own as to the order and details of presentation. The very fact that a constant succession of laboratory guides is appearing shows that teachers differ as